REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 12, and 16 are pending in this application. All of the pending claims are rejected. None of the pending claims is currently amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 12, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,701,437 (Hoke) in view of US 7,072,346 (Hama) in view of US 7,092,397 (Chandran). The Examiner concedes that Hoke and Hama fail to suggest using a group identifier to identify a group security association to transform a packet. However, the Examiner asserts that the newly cited reference, Chandran, shows this feature at column 2, lines 1-8. That passage reads, in its entirety:

> then typically forwarded to another network, such as the Internet,
> via an edge router, for example. In the example above, each ISP
> can be assigned a unique MPLS-VPN tag that identifies traffic
> belong [sic] to that ISP. The MPLS-VPN tag can then be used as a
> basis to apply security/QoS or any other defined policies on the
> traffic.

Surely this cursory statement without further detail or illustration in the Figures is insufficient to support the rejection. What sort of security is applied? How is the security applied? Where is the security applied in the network? The answers to these questions are found in the recited claims, but not in the cited passage. Applicant therefore respectfully traverses.

Even assuming the cited passage from Chandran were sufficient to suggest transforming or restoring the packet according to a group security association with the MPLS-VPN tag at the ingress or egress point of the backbone as recited in the independent claims, the teaching still fails to suggest the claimed invention because the MPLS-VPN tag cannot, by definition, be a group identifier. It is well known that MPLS tags specify a label switched path (LSP) through an

MPLS network. The LSP between source and destination is a function of the logical locations of the source and destination in the network. Therefore, different clients will have different LSPs, and different MPLS-VPN tags. Since different clients have different MPLS-VPN tags, those tags are not a group identifier. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore requested.

Even assuming the cited passage from Chandran were sufficient to suggest transforming the packet according to a group security association based on a group identifier at the ingress point or egress of the backbone as recited in the independent claims, the proposed combination of Chandran with Hoke is improper. If the proposed modification or combination of the prior art would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims *prima facie* obvious. *In re Ratti*, 270 F.2d 810, 123 USPQ 349 (CCPA 1959) (Claims were directed to an oil seal comprising a bore engaging portion with outwardly biased resilient spring fingers inserted in a resilient sealing member. The primary reference relied upon in a rejection based on a combination of references disclosed an oil seal wherein the bore engaging portion was reinforced by a cylindrical sheet metal casing. Patentee taught the device required rigidity for operation, whereas the claimed invention required resiliency. The court reversed the rejection holding the "suggested combination of references would require a substantial reconstruction and redesign of the elements shown in [the primary reference] as well as a change in the basic principle under which the [primary reference] construction was designed to operate." 270 F.2d at 813, 123 USPQ at 352.). Hoke specifically relies upon tunneling to provide security.[1] The tunneling technique, which is described in the Background of this application, has problems which the presently claimed invention helps overcome. Further, the tunneling technique cannot simply be

transformed into the claimed invention by using a group identifier. Rather, the two techniques are separate and distinct. Consequently, use of a group identifier to obtain a group security association would change the principle of operation of Hoke, and the references are not properly combined.

Independent claims 1, 6 and 10 are allowable for the reasons stated above. Dependent claims 2, 12 and 16 further distinguish the invention, and are allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims.

Conclusion

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' Attorney at the number listed below so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

January 10, 2008   ____/Holmes W. Anderson/_____
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[1] Hoke at column 6, line 67 through column 7, line 6.